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Child Poverty High In Manchester, New Carsey Demographic Analysis Finds

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DURHAM, N.H. –In the city of Manchester, 25 percent of children live below the poverty line, a high rate that is in stark contrast to the state's child poverty rate of just 10 percent, one of the nation's lowest.

That's the most surprising finding from a new analysis of demographic trends in the Manchester-Nashua metropolitan area by the Carsey Institute at the University of New Hampshire. The new brief, by Carsey Institute senior demographer Kenneth Johnson and Robert Macieski, associate professor of history at UNH at Manchester, presents recent demographic shifts in Manchester, Nashua and suburban Hillsborough County alongside historical perspectives of the region.

Johnson and Macieski are presenting and discussing this research today (Oct. 26, 2009) at UNH Manchester (www.carseyinstitute.unh.edu/news/events.html).

"New Hampshire has long been recognized as a state with low poverty levels, particularly among its children," says Johnson, noting that the Granite State had the lowest child poverty rate in the nation in 2007. "And in contrast to Manchester's 25 percent child poverty level, only eight percent of children are in poverty in Nashua and five percent in the suburban areas of Hillsborough."

"Disparities in poverty levels across the Manchester-Nashua metropolitan area have a long history, which we explore in this report," adds Macieski.

Analyzing data from the U.S. Census Bureau, the report finds additional contrasts between the cities of Nashua and Manchester and suburban Hillsborough County. After significant growth between 1990 and 2000, Manchester and Nashua barely grew from 2000 to 2007: Manchester grew by only 1,700 residents, or two percent, and Nashua by 200 residents, just .3 percent. The rest of Hillsborough County, however, grew by nearly 20,000 people, or 11 percent. Suburban Hillsborough is gaining migrants while Manchester and Nashua are experiencing migration loss.

The Manchester-Nashua metropolitan area is New Hampshire's most diverse, with nearly half of all the state's minorities living there. Minorities fueled the modest growth of Nashua and Manchester, with the minority population growing 32 percent in Manchester and 24 percent in Nashua, while non-Hispanic white population declined in both areas. In the suburbs, most

population gain was fueled by non-Hispanic whites, though the minority population also grew.

This report is the first collaborative research project between the Carsey Institute and the University of New Hampshire at Manchester to develop increased understanding of trends in small cities. The brief, "Demographic Trends in the Manchester-Nashua Metropolitan Area," is available to download at <http://www.carseyinstitute.unh.edu/publications/IB-Johnson-Manchester.pdf>.

The Carsey Institute conducts policy and applied research on vulnerable families and on sustainable community development, giving policy makers and practitioners the timely, independent resources they need to effect change in their communities. Learn more at <http://carseyinstitute.unh.edu/>.

The University of New Hampshire at Manchester is the urban campus of the University of New Hampshire. UNH Manchester students have the best of both worlds--a nationally recognized UNH education combining liberal arts, science, business, and technology with the unique opportunities available in a vibrant urban campus setting. Learn more at www.unhm.unh.edu.

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